

their peers from across the country on Saturday, May 10, 2014, to earn 1st place at the 12th annual Team America Rocketry Challenge. Champions Amanda Semler, 18; Andrew White, 16; Nick Dimos, 16; Austin Bralick, 16; and Bailey Robertson, 15, bested more than 700 other teams representing 48 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands to earn the national title. These students will now go on to represent the United States in London at the Farnborough International Airshow.

Team America Rocketry Challenge, TARC, is the world's largest student rocket contest and the aerospace and defense industry's flagship program designed to encourage students to pursue study and careers in science, technology, engineering and math, STEM. Sponsored by the Aerospace Industries Association, the National Association of Rocketry and more than 20 industry partners, TARC provides middle and high school students the opportunity to design, build and launch model rockets in a competition among more than 5,000 students nationwide.

I cannot express how proud I am of these students whose achievement represents tremendous dedication and unwavering commitment. It is equally encouraging to see young people with such a strong commitment to STEM education and fields of study. I wish these Creekview High School students and teachers the best as they go on to represent our Nation in London.●

#### POWESHIEK COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Poweshiek County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has

worked with me to secure funding in Poweshiek County worth over \$1.2 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$11.1 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memories of working together have to include the community's tremendous success with using farm bill funds for important local projects such as remodeling and expanding St. Francis Manor, which received a direct loan of \$1 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Facilities Program.

Among the highlights:

**School grants:** Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than \$132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Poweshiek County has received \$556,624 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Poweshiek County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling \$151,108.

**Agricultural and rural development:** Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Poweshiek County has received more than \$3.2 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

**Keeping Iowa communities safe:** I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Poweshiek County's fire departments have received over \$628,329 for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

**Wellness and health care:** Improving the health and wellness of all Ameri-

cans has been something I have been passionate about for decades. That is why I fought to dramatically increase funding for disease prevention, innovative medical research, and a whole range of initiatives to improve the health of individuals and families not only at the doctor's office but also in our communities, schools, and workplaces. I am so proud that Americans have better access to clinical preventive services, nutritious food, smoke-free environments, safe places to engage in physical activity, and information to make healthy decisions for themselves and their families. These efforts not only save lives, they will also save money for generations to come thanks to the prevention of costly chronic diseases, which account for a whopping 75 percent of annual health care costs. I am pleased that Poweshiek County has recognized this important issue by securing more than \$360,000 for community wellness activities.

**Disability Rights:** Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television, but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of Poweshiek County, both those with and without disabilities. And they make us proud to be a part of a community and country that respects the worth and civil rights of all of our citizens.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Poweshiek County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Poweshiek County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

#### WAPELLO COUNTY, IOWA

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